

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 19, please amend the third paragraph as follows:

This testing verifies that a mark can be provided, according to the invention, which has a sharp, vivid appearance and which can be maintained in a legible state for a substantial period of running time. Surprisingly, this mark legibility is maintained without appreciably affecting the operating/performance characteristics of the belts by reason of altering the belt side surfaces. While the prior art has recognized the desirability of placing markings on the belt side surfaces, as seen, for example, in U.S. Patent No. 6,103,349 (Matsumoto), this mark application has been carried out without any alteration of the side surfaces, presumably as a result of a conventional belief that such alteration would adversely affect the integrity of the belt. Matsumoto places the markings in an area that is not contacted by a cooperating pulley in operation. Matsumoto does not teach any surface alteration, as by inscription.

In short, the industry has predominantly used a back side marking technique, and has contended with marks that wear off after a relatively short running time. A solution to this problem, as offered by Matsumoto, is to surface treat a side of the belt without structural alteration, presumably as a result of a belief that such alteration could adversely affect belt performance. Matsumoto also teaches marking in a region that does not contact a pulley so that the mark will not be quickly worn off in use. The inventors herein have discovered that the sides can be altered in such a manner to provide

a more durable mark without compromising belt performance, even in pulley contacting regions.